

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013  
6:30 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Olson, Brantley, T. McCarthy, Austin, Lyons, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: Vizzo-Paniccia, Curwen

*The special public speaking session regarding snow removal in the city began at 5:30 pm. The session recessed at 6:45 pm for the purpose of allowing Cecil Young who previously signed up to address the city council.*

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

**Cecil C. Young  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607**

Response regarding unjust termination matter and the handling of snow removal in the City.

Mr. Young spoke about the snow removal issue that occurred during the blizzard. He questioned why preparations weren't made beforehand when the expected blizzard conditions and the amount of expected snow was forecast. He further questioned if the delay in plowing the streets had anything to do with the city and Mayor trying to qualify for state of emergency funds from FEMA. He suggested that arrangements should be put in place now to address snow removal, should it occur again. He mentioned that he thought Council member Holloway downplayed the severity of the problem on the east end of Bridgeport and that he said only two people complained about the problem, which absolutely wasn't true. He repeated that the Mayor needed to step up and address the issue before it happens again. He further mentioned the matter of his unjust termination; however Council President McCarthy let him know that his time to speak was up.

*The special public speaking session regarding snow removal reconvened and continued until 7:15 pm.*

Council President McCarthy officially called the public speaking session to order at 7:20 pm.

The city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Olson, Brantley, T. McCarthy, Austin, Lyons, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: Vizzo-Paniccia, Curwen

*Refer to Cecil Young's comments above.*

*The following persons signed up to speak before the city council prior to the public speaking session:*

**John Marshall Lee** – *below are his comments*

**30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605**

### **City Council Meeting February 19, 2013-Public Speaking**

Mayor Finch, Council President McCarthy, City Council Representatives and my neighbors and friends of the Bridgeport community. For several years I have made it my business to learn more about governance in the City of Bridgeport. I have read documents, attended meetings, spoken with "old-timers" and written and spoken about what I see. You may remember that I come back to three words that I seek, that are necessary for Bridgeport to heal itself, and that some people use but do not deliver, perhaps because they do not understand.

The first term is OPEN. Government administrations need to maintain open communication between elections with the public. The Finch administration has not done this effectively. You have used the latest technology to Tweet, to make Robo Calls, and otherwise broadcast your voice. But communication features listening as well. The Charter Commission did not wish to hear topical comment at each of their meetings. The Council Committees will not allocate time to listen to topical comments routinely. And the Charter directs that annually public comments are solicited by the City for a hearing on the Capital budget. This is in addition to the public meeting the Council provides on the annual budget. The Budget Meeting provides no comment, response or opportunity for dialogue with the taxpayers. When the Charter was defeated you find it necessary to have multiple listening sessions. When the public finds the snow removal management ineffective, you find time for the community to vent. Did you mean public venting or an opportunity for you to learn from experience? I am confused.

City rules are not always followed and between Mayor's Office and City Council you make all the rules and Ordinances anyway. Why don't you consider opening every City meeting of all kind except situations where Executive Session is called to allow attending public to make two minutes of comments and provide some form of response to the public? Include the questions, comments and concerns in the public record. If you do this and the public gets accustomed to your regular listening, that will be a major step towards communication.

The second term is ACCOUNTABLE. I assumed professional competence, reporting accuracy and timely work from those employed by the City. Initially it is a sign of respect for the office held by "public service" employees. I used to assume that someone was reviewing paperwork that was available to the public. In this regard you are failing. And if your documentation on its face has errors that the public can spot, then any trust in your words or the accountability of your work is sacrificed. You are failing in this regard. Take the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report-2012 for example. It has December 21 dates of issue from Ann Kelly Lenz and Blume Shapiro, the external audit firm. However, this did not become public at the City Clerk office until after January 25, 2013. Five weeks to review with a fine tooth comb. Did the City Long Term Liabilities decrease or increase last year. Conflicting narrative statements on page 3 and 16 claim each direction. Why not discovered and corrected? Liabilities did increase by the way and there were more errors in the narrative and in the numerical presentations. Too many for our presentation tonight.

The most recent monthly financial report to the City council is November, 2012 that was posted at the City Clerk office on February 5, 2013. There is no single page summary as has been customary for years. There are no variance narratives to explain difference showing or projected in report revenues and appropriations. And the most surprising discovery is that the initial pages showing revenues to the City for the first five months is titled APPROPRIATIONS on each page. A new error has crept into City reporting. This is human error that erodes your accountability and indicates a lack of oversight, review and monitoring. Where are the watchdogs?

The last principle is TRANSPARENCY. I am not talking about the invisible "ghost positions" that the City has proposed in budgets for years, which the City Council passed on in the adopted budget, failing to challenge the funding of positions that were vacant at the beginning and end of multiple years. This past September, someone, presumably the Mayor authorized a change of Line Item 51000 in over 60 departmental budgets, those records Full Time Pay expenses for City employees. \$3.6 Million was reduced with these changes but the City has had no comments. Budget & Appropriations has no recorded comments. No variance comments either? Where is transparency? More important, if the money is not spent where you decided to approve it in May, where will you spend it after the change in September? And when will you let us know?

The 2013-14 budget according to the City Charter is due to the Council by March 1, 2013. Will the public be accorded more opportunity for their speaking and your combined listening in the near future? Consider the subject seriously. Time will tell.

John Marshall Lee  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605  
203-259-9642

**David Walker** – waived his right to address the city council due to the fact that he spoke during the special public speaking session.

**Reverend McCluster**  
**477 Broad Street**  
**Bridgeport, CT**

Reverend McCluster spoke about respect, noting that if you give it; you get it. He recalled hearing about the Department of Transportation and Bridgeport Public Facilities working two 20-hour shifts during the blizzard. He stated that the issue wasn't FEMA, the Mayor etc. He said he thought the first issue was the storm and how we responded to it. He said that although there was no certain answer, he recalled that he saw two plow trucks stuck on I-95 and he realized that he would have to close his church that Sunday. He further commented about what didn't work to make the point how some people were still driving on the streets despite the warnings not to. He said he felt that they had to be fair that there was a communication breakdown and his attitude was to get out of the way and let public facilities do what they had to do. He thanked Charles Carroll and his staff for doing what they did trying to get the streets plowed as quickly as possible. He emphasized that yelling, name calling, insulting and blaming didn't work and what will work is cooperation. He further mentioned that consideration should be given for the residents that were financially strained by tow removal and any fines they may have incurred.

Hearing none, the public speaking session was closed.

The public speaking session closed at 7:30 pm.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013**

**7:00 PM**

**City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace**

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**

**ATTENDANCE:** Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Olson, Brantley, T. McCarthy, Austin, Lyons, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Baker, Holloway

**ABSENT:** Council members: Vizzo-Paniccia, Curwen

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

He urged all the people that came out to speak tonight and didn't get an opportunity to speak during the special public speaking session to record their complaints at the tables that were set up in the hallway.

Prayer - the prayer was offered by Council member Olson and Reverend McCluster.

Pledge of Allegiance - the pledge was led by the city clerk Fleeta Hudson.

Roll Call - the city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

## **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

Approval of City Council Minutes: January 22, 2013

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**33-12** Communication from Public Facilities re: Application for Waiver to Extend Driveway Width Located at 680 Park Avenue – Roosevelt School, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

**34-12** Communication from OPED re: (Ref. #11-99) Community Capital Fund, Inc. (Successor to Bridgeport Neighborhood Fund, Inc.) Request to Release Reverter on 107-109 Columbia Street, 117 Columbia Street, 123-125 Columbia Street; 29 Ridge Avenue and 35 Ridge Avenue (the “Properties”), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

**35-12** Communication from OPED re: Proposed Land Acquisition Agreement for a Portion of the General Electric Property located on Boston Avenue for the purpose of constructing a new high school, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

**36-12** Communication from Treasurer re: Proposed Request for Approval of Master Banking Services Agreement with Webster Bank, National Association, referred to Contracts Committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services